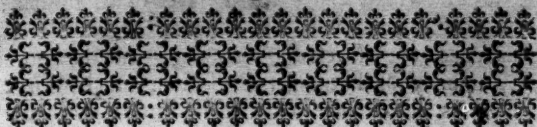


To his Excellency.

The Lord Chief General

CROMWELL:

FOR as much as your Excellency hath had the prehemineny in the Affairs concerning the good of this Nation; your Petitioner most humbly desireth that your Lordship may still continue for to labour to establish the truth of the Gospel both in Church and Commonwealth : for which cause your Petitioner desireth to discharge himself as followeth.



A Glas, or Brief Description of two
Great Errors, or Main Causes
of all our Confusions in
Church and Common-
wealth; the one in Teaching,
and the other in Practice.

*To the Excellency of our Church and State, un-
der the Government of our Lord and Sa-
viour JESUS CHRIST:*

*The humble Petition of John Thompson of the Pa-
rish of Bingley in the County of York:*

Humbly sheweth,



That by the grace of God, your Petition-
er hath been engaged for to stand in op-
position against the iniquity of the times,
which chiefly consisteth in perverting the
encrease of the earth to private mens uses, for the sat-
isfying of their own Covetous desires, which is Idola-
try, or rather committing of Sacriledge; for which
cause

cause he did refuse to pay the encrease of his Possession unto one *James Sagar*, as formerly he had done; whereupon the aforelaid *James Sagar* entered forcibly upon your Petitioners Possession, and by force of Arms did convey away to his owne use, the benefit of your Petitioners Improvement, to his great loss and damage; and hath also brought down a Tryal upon a Lease of Ejectment, and hath obtained a Verdict and an Execution, by vertue whereof, the said *James Sagar* retaineth your Petitioners House, and forty Acres of Land, contrary to the truth of the Law: For the Law requireth that we love God above all, and our Neighbour as our selves; so that every one is enjoined by vertue of that love which they ought to bear unto God and man, for to pay the encrease of that which they possess for the magnifying of Gods Mercy towards the poor and needy, and his Justice towards the disobedient; and such like necessary uses as may be for the advantage of Gods Glory and the good of the whole State: therefore whosoever taketh payment for the encrease of the earth to their own private uses, taketh payment for what is not their own, and thereby robbeth God of his Glory and the Church and poor Commonalty of their right; and if one man take payment of another for their Land or Possession, then they ought to pay for the Land or the Possession before they can lawfully enjoy the benefit of the same again.

As for your Petitioners cause, it is far more considerable: for he was in Possession of a parcel of Land which was given in free and perpetual Almes unto the Officers
of

of the Church of God, as Feoffees in trust, in behalf of the poor distressed Members of Jesus Christ, so that the benefit of these Lands is to be disposed perpetually from time to time unto the use of the Church, never to be revoked. And although the Officers of the Church and State in former times have defrauded the Church and Commonwealth of the benefit of these Lands, by perverting them to Superstitious uses, or selling them unto private mens uses: yet notwithstanding, it is in the power of their Successors to reform such abuses, for the Title remaineth still in them, to the use of the poor Commonalty from Generation to Generation.

And although some do object and say, That those Lands whereon your Petitioner lived were given to maintain Superstition: yet that is more then they can prove, that there were not a faithful man in twenty Generations, that out of the sincerity of his heart gave his Lands for maintaining the truth of the Gospel, in relieving the poor distressed members of Jesus Christ. But it is very like that such accusations spring out of Lust rather then Love; and that under pretence of abhorring Idols, they commit Sacriledge. But howsoever, we should have been so far from perverting the encrease of these Lands to our own use, as that every one should rather have been enjoyned for to have payed the encrease of his own inheritance for the magnifying of Gods Mercy towards the poor and needy; and his Justice towards the disobedient, and such like necessary uses as may be for the advantage of Gods glory, and the good of the whole State; that thereby the poor Commonalty

might have been freed from Assessments and Excise, which is imposed upon them for to pay out of the fruits of their own labours. When they have payed the encrease of their Possessions to private mens uses, whereby the poor and innocent people are brought into slavery and bondage, and the disobedient proud and unruly, set at liberty to oppress the poor Commonalty at their pleasure.

As for your Petitioner, he hath but stood to discharge himself in paying the benefit of the Land, unto that use whereunto it doth belong, and he knoweth no just cause why he should be dispossessed of his Birth-right and lawful Possession: for your Petitioner's father, was but engaged unto the aforesaid *James Sagar*, for default of one hundred and forty pounds; and the said *James Sagar* and his father, have caused your Petitioner, and his Partners to pay in consideration of the said Sum of One hundred and forty Pounds, above Four hundred and fifty Pounds, and hath also cast your Petitioner out of his Possession with force of Armes, without giving him any satisfaction for his Possession, or improvement of the said Lands, the which improvement extendeth to a greater value then the Lands were worth when your Petitioner's father first entered upon them: so that he hath entered into the value of above Eight hundred and fifty Pounds in money and Land in consideration of One hundred and forty.

Therefore your Petitioner most humbly desireth the Excellency of our Church and State to take his Grievances into consideration; for if they be blessed who

who provide for the poor and needy, they must needs be cursed who rob the poor and needy of that which was provided for them: and if Usury and Extortion were abominable in the sight of God under the Law of *Moses*, much more under the profession of the Gospel: for we are engaged by the Law of the Covenant of Grace in Jesus Christ, to yeild obedience to his Commandments, that we may abide in his love, as he hath yeilded obedience to his Fathers Commandments, and abideth in his love; and this is his Commandment, that we *love one another*; and love seeketh not its own, but the good of the Beloved, in laboring to make them partakers of the goodness of God, as God hath been pleased to make them partakers of his goodness, whether Temporal or Spiritual, for he that is faithful in the least, is also faithful in much; but if we be unfaithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will trust us with the true Treasure? *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be informed ye that are Judges of the earth:* For we are unfaithful in the unrighteous Mammon, and have made void the perfect Law of Liberty by our own traditions, walking contrary to the faith and example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by making a benefit one of anothers wants, in causing one another to pay for the increase of the earth, which is the gift of God for the use of all his Creatures, that every one may enjoy the benefit of the same in the use of a lawful Calling, and not to our own private uses, without any lawful Calling at all, for the satisfying of our covetous desires, which is Idolatry, or rather committing of Sacrilege;) which ought to have been disposed for the maintaining of the Service of God: But
we

we cannot serve God and Mammon : If we pay the increase of the earth to mens own private uses, where-with shall we maintain the Service of God? and though the Lord hath been provoked to execute his judgement upon us for these and the like Transgressions, yet notwithstanding we stil continue in our former iniquities without any Reformation at all. Therefore your Petitioner most humbly desireth the Excellency of our Church and State to take his Grievances into consideration, and also the dangerous condition wherein we stand by reason of our iniquities : which being done, he hopeth by your assistance to be restored again into his former Possession, and according to his bounden duty he shall pray, &c.

That the Lord will be pleased to make void all Exactions in Usury, of Money, Goods, or Lands, and that every one may be enjoined to pay the Encrease of that which they possess for the magnifying of Gods mercy towards the poor and needy, and his Justice towards the disobedient and unruly; for the Law was given for the Lawless and unruly; and who so lawless and unruly, as he that layeth house to house, and Land to Land, till there be no place for the desolate: yet must the desolate be enjoined to labour still for to maintain their own desolation by paying the increase of the earth to private mens uses, whereby they are enabled to oppress the poor the more, and to exalt themselves the higher, to the great dishonor of Almighty God, and the overthrow of the Government of the Church and State, or otherwise be cast out of house and harbor, and thereby be made the more desolate; so that he that departeth from evil,
maketh

maketh himself a prey. Therefore your Petitioner
 most humbly desireth the Excellency of our Church
 and State to take his Grievances into consideration,
 and also to labour to reform these our abuses, least the
 Lord be provoked to break out in his wrathful indig-
 nation to our greater confusion, *For it is written, Cur-*
sed is every one that continueth not in the Commandments
of the Law to do them; but the Law requireth that we
love God above all, and our neighbour as our selves; as
 consequently, that we *serve one another in love;* there-
 fore the Landlord, or Letter of Money, Goods or
 Lands ought to be enjoined by the Law, for to serve
 the poor Commonalty in lieu of that payment which
 they receive for the benefit of the Money, Goods, or
 Lands, according as the poor Commonalty is neces-
 sitated to serve them, by paying them for the posses-
 sion of the same; or otherwise to pay them for the pos-
 session when they desire to enter into the same: for
 there is nothing that giveth Justice satisfaction, but
 Mercy: neither is there any thing that Mercy delight-
 eth so much in, as Justice; therefore saith the Lord
 Jesus Christ, *The same measure that you meet, it shall be*
measured to you again: But it is Injustice for the Rich
 in their Prosperity to make a benefit of the poor in
 their necessity, much more to sell the Inheritance of
 the poor to maintain their own superfluity: but these
 Lands whereon your Petitioner lived, is the Inheri-
 tance of the poor, and they were sold to maintain the
 Prerogative of the Rich; therefore by the Land- Law
 they ought to be restored again to the use of the poor
 Commonalty, for they were given in free and perpet-
 ual Almes for to maintain the truth of the Gospel: for
 pure

pure Religion and undefiled before God is to visit the poor, the fatherless, and the Widow; and to make void the works of Charity is little less then to make void the life and power both of the Law and the Gospel.

Therefore your Petitioner most humbly desireth the Excellency of our Church and State to take his Grievances into consideration, and also to labour to reform these abuses; which being done, he doubteth not but that he shall be restored again unto his former Possession:

And according to his bounden duty shall ever pray, &c.

But

*Learning and Knowledg not season'd with Grace,
Sets Folly and Pride in Wisdom's chief place.*

*To my very loving Friend Mr. Robinson, Minister
at Atley in the County of York.*

FOr as much as we are engaged by the grace of God in Jesus Christ to fight against iniquity, Heresie and false Doctrine, I desire therefore to be resolved how it will stand with the testimony of the Holy Ghost, witnessed in the Scriptures, for to teach that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ died for none but for Believers: Is the faithful believing man an enemy unto the Lord Jesus Christ? *When we were enemies Christ died for us: but faith purifieth the heart*
and

and maketh us friends: If the Lord Jesus Christ died for none but for Believers, then he died for none at all, for there was not a faithful man in all the Posterity of *Adam* without sin, (Jesus Christ only excepted :) And to say that the Lord Jesus Christ died for none but for Believers, is to make void the Redemption of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the hearts of the Faithful; for the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the hearts of the Faithful doth chiefly consist in giving evidence against themselves, that they are unfaithful and disobedient: but he died for the unfaithful and rebellious, that believing in him they might have life and strength for to walk in all loyal obedience according to his Commandments: therefore he made a Covenant with *Abraham* or his Seed, that in their Seed should all the Nations of the earth be blessed. But to teach that Jesus Christ died for none but for Believers, is to make void the Promise of God; and to shut up the gates of Mercy against the poor Publican, which is sensible of no hing but sin and guilt, and to entertain the proud Pharisee, with his presumption of faith and works: but what faith the Lord Jesus Christ to those proud fellows that come boasting in their faith, that they have eaten and drunken in his presence, and in his Name done many great works, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* Therefore my beloved friend, I beseech you reconcile your self either unto the Word, or unto the world, and stand not up as a God betwixt them, *For God hath reconciled the world unto himself through Jesus Christ, and committed all judgment unto the Son:* and it is not the will of the Father in the Son that any should perish,

but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth : therefore Jesus Christ came *to seek and save that which was lost, and is ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and given gifts unto men*, yea unto the rebellious also, that they might be brought into subjection unto the truth of the Gospel for their good: and though they be enemies and persecute the Lord Jesus Christ in his members, yet the more they persecute them, the more it shall extend to the filling up of the measure of Christs sufferings, to the greater advantage of the faithful, and destruction of the wicked: yet not so but that they may have benefit by Jesus Christ: for if the rejecting of the *Jews* were the bringing in of the *Gentiles*, what shall the calling of the *Jews* be but life from the dead? and that caused the Apostle to stand in admiration at the wisdom of Gods goodness and mercy, in that he had *shut up all under condemnation, that he might have mercy upon all*: so that there is none exempted from Mercy if they submit unto Justice, nor excused by Justice if they abuse Mercy. Therefore my beloved friend, I desire that Mr. *Wales* and you will be pleased to take notice of my weak expressions, and if I have failed, or be mistaken in any thing, I shall be willing to refer my self unto better judgment: but I know that Mr. *Wales* thinketh himself of a sound judgment, therefore he did assist you, as it were, to joyn battle with the Spirit of God in the hearts of the faithful, in teaching, that the Scriptures were the principal, and the evidence of the Spirit in the hearts of the faithful but the Counterpane; and that if there be any thing in the heart of man more then in the written Word of God, it is nought but Heresie and of the Divil: but I think it is little less then Blasphemy

Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost for to make the Spirit of God in the hearts of the Faithful subordinate unto the letter of the Word, which is but a witness of the truth: but the Spirit convinceth the soul of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment, and puts that soul that sinneth to death, that he may be the light and life of man for to lead him in all truth, more then the Scripture doth expresse, or the heart of man conceive: but it is very like, you would have men to give more respect to the persons of them that take upon them to bear witness of the truth, then of the truth it self; and then you could deal with them according to your pleasure: a pretty Pope. The written Word of God, you say, is the Principal, and the Testimony of the Spirit in the heart of man but the Counterpane: Wel, you have the Counterpane in your heart that you have lost or sold your inheritance, and it may be you have another evidence to shew that you have a friend that hath redeemed the same in your behalf. Well, but where is the Seal or Witness of the truth that you are reconciled unto that friend? Have you satisfied the Justice of the Father committed unto the Son by yeilding obedience unto his Commandments, so that he hath set to his Seal that you shall continue in his love, as he hath yeilded obedience unto his Fathers Commandments, and abideth in his love? If it be so, then you can give evidence that all the Scriptures that the world is able to contain, are not sufficient to set out the unspeakable measure of Gods Grace and Mercy towards the faithful and obedient, and the unspeakable measure of his Justice against the unfaithful and disobedient, for you have tasted of them both more then the Scripture is a-

ble to expresse unto you, or the heart of man to conceive; if not, then it may be you may desire with *Zebedees* children to sit at his right hand, or at his left, but you cannot tell whether you be able to drink of that cup which he hath drunk of, and to be baptized with that Baptism which he is baptized with, yea or no. Therefore my beloved friend, try your own heart by the Scripture, and see if the truth of your own heart can give evidence with the written Word of God, that you have walked in all loyal obedience, according to his will manifested in the Scriptures, yea or no: If the Spirit of God in your heart, do witness with your spirits, that you are justified by his grace in you, and sanctified by his holy Spirit, then you have the evidence in your self, and the Scriptures as a Counterpane for your defence, to manifest unto the world that you are an heir of life and salvation; but if otherwise, then indeed the Scripture will prove the principal, and your own conscience but the Counterpane, to shew unto you what you have lost or sold to your greater grief and condemnation. Therefore my beloved friend, do not esteem the Spirit of God in the hearts of the faithful at so low a rate, neither withhold from them their temporal estates here among men, contrary unto the Scriptures, which you say is the Word of God; for as the life of the body dependeth upon the soul, and the life of the soul upon God; even so the livelihood both of body and soul dependeth upon submitting unto the Word of God established in the hearts of the faithful.

But

*Learning and Knowledge not season'd with Grace,
Sets Folly and Pride in wisdom's chief place.*

F I N I S.

But it is objected against some expressions formerly mentioned in the Petition, That if men can have nothing for lending of their Money, Goods or Lands, what shall they themselves live upon? To which I answer, If they have an occasion to use them themselves, they are not enjoined to lend them to others, except love do constrain them; and if love do constrain them, then they lend not for a Reward, but to supply the necessity of the Borrower, according as they desire to have their necessity supplied when they have nothing wherewith to supply the same, nor to reward them that do supply their necessity; yet notwithstanding they are necessitated to beg or borrow, though they cannot tell how to pay the same again; but if they cannot beg or borrow except they be engaged to bring themselves into greater slavery, they had better famish for the present: therefore I say, it is necessary that both you and I be enjoined to lend our Money, and Goods, or Lands without pay, and that the Borrower be enjoined for to give out of the same, for to supply the necessity of them that are not able to borrow, nor subsist in their Callings without help, according as we are enjoined to give out of that which we have in our own possessions; that there may be a sufficient stock of money in every County, Town, or Parish, for to supply the necessity of them that are not able to subsist in their Callings, without begging or borrowing of others; for when men are necessitated to beg or borrow Money, Goods or Lands upon private men, they are thereby constrained either to abuse the Charity of the faithful, or maintain the partiality of the Oppressor,

so that Faith and Charity is obscurely eclipsed, but Pride and Partiality highly exalted. Therefore your Petitioner most humbly desireth the Excellency of our Church and State to take his Grievances into consideration, for it is not possible to maintain the Government of the Church and State, according to the Law of the Covenant of Grace in Jesus Christ, so long as the poor Commonalty are necessitated to pay the benefit of that which they possess to private mens uses; for Partiality, which is the foundation of Idolatry, alwayes opposeth it self against Fidelity, which worketh by love; so that the children of this world in their Generation are wiser then the children light.

Therefore if it like the Excellency of our Church and State for to labour for to work such a Reformation, as the Lord requireth by the Prophet *Jeremy*, it will be requisite in the first place for to lay the foundation in Charity, that by the bond of love we may break every unlawful bargain, that the oppressed may go free.

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But it is objected again by one of the House, that if Usury of Money, Goods, or Lands were not tolerated, it would destroy mens propriety.

To which I answer,

Under favour, I do not see that it is lawful that any man should be dispossessed of his Propriety in Money, Goods, or Lands, except he do dispossess himself of the same: But if he do dispossess himself of the same, by taking payment of the Borrower, for lending of Money, Goods, or Lands; then he depriveth himself of his Propriety; and I do not see, that it is lawful for the Lender, to enter into the possession of the Borrower at the time appointed, without paying the Borrower valuable consideration for his Propriety which he hath in the possession, in lieu of that money which he hath paid unto the Lender for the possession of the same. An example or Reason to confirm the truth of the cause :

If the Lender of Money, Goods, or Lands, had the same in his own possession, then he should be liable for to pay valuable consideration unto the use of the Church and State, after eight pounds, or ten pounds for the hundred; for the magnifying of Gods Mercy towards the poor and needy; and his Justice towards the Disobedient and unruly; and such like necessary uses, as might be for the advantage of Gods glory, and the good of the whole State, if the Government of the Church and State were but maintained in a Legal way, as it ought to be.

But because that men must have their Properties upholden and improved by the sweat of other mens browes, and receive the benefit of the same unto

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their

their own private use, for maintaining of their own lusts and concupiscence: therefore it is, that the poor distressed Members of Jesus Christ ly desolate, complaining in the streets, and no man regardeth them; and also the poor Communalty injoynd for to maintain the Government of the Church and State, by Sslements and Excise, out of their food and raiment, wherewith they should relieve themselves and their Families.

But if every man were enjoyned by the Law of our Nation, as indeed he is by the Law of the Covenant of grace, received by faith in Jesus Christ, for to pay valuable consideration out of that which he possesseth, according to the necessity of the times, for the magnifying of Gods Mercy towards the poor and needy, as God hath been pleased to magnifie his Mercy towards him in the use of that which he possesseth, as hath been formerly expressed: then it would follow consequently, that the Lender should be as much engaged unto the Borrower, for taking charge of his superfluity in Money, Goods, or Lands, and discharging all dues and duties belonging unto the Church and State out of the same, as the Borrower should be unto him: therefore the Lender of Money, Goods, or Lands, ought to be enjoyned by the Law, for to pay valuable consideration unto the Borrower for the possession, according as he causeth the Borrower for to pay unto him: alwayes this provided, that the Borrower discharge all duties belonging to Church and Commonwealth, and also yield the possession at the time appointed, in as good worth as it was when he entred into it, for, *The same measure*
that

that we mete, it shall be measured to us again: And if we will not lend our Money, Goods, or Lands unto others, upon these, or the like termes, but keep them in our own possession, then we shall be liable to pay unto the Church and State, according as we have caused others for to pay unto us; that the Government of the Church and State may be maintained in a legal way, both in respect of Justice and Mercy, for God is a God of order; therefore it is requisite that we labour for to submit our selves unto such Government as he requireth in the word of his truth; that the poor distressed Members of Jesus Christ may be relieved, both in respect of their temporal estate, and also of their Spiritual; and that every unlawful Bargain may be broken, and the Oppressed set free, lest the Lord Jesus Christ be provoked for to *bruise us with a rod of Iron, and dash us in pieces like a Potters Vessel:* For if we continue in our former iniquities, we cannot escape the ensuing miseries which the Lord will bring upon the heads of his enemies.

Therefore let us labour for to submit our selves under the mighty hand of God, by abasing our selves in labouring for to supply the necessities one of another, and the Lord will exalt us in due time; for, *He filleth the hungry with good things, and sendeth the rich empty away.*

As for Your Petitioner, he hath but stodd for to discharge himself in paying the benefit of the Land unto that use whereunto it doth belong, and he was in possession before the foresaid *James Sagars* Father had any thing to do with the same; and have also

discharged all dues and duties, which were imposed upon him, towards the maintaining of the Government of the Church and State; yet notwithstanding, because he could not still dispend for to pay the benefit of those Lands, which were given to maintain the service of God, to the foresaid *James Sagar's* private use, as formerly he had done, the foresaid *James* did enter forcibly upon your Petitioners possession, as is formerly expressed, and by force of Armes retains the same to Your Petitioners great loss and damage.

Therefore he desireth this Honourable Court, for to take his grievances into consideration, and also to labour to reform these our abuses; which being done, he humbly desireth, that by Your assistance he may be restored again into his former possession, and according to his bounden duty,

He shall ever pray, &c.

God will try his people by his Word,
And purge them both by Fire and Sword.

F I N I S.

